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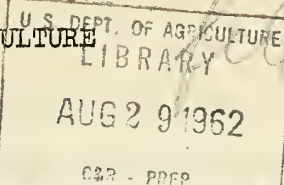
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Apr. 2, 1952

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary



ANTIDOTE TO FEAR

Talk by Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan at University of Vermont, Town and Country Week, Burlington, Vermont, Wednesday, April 2, 1952, 8:00 p.m., EST.

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A famous New Englander, Ralph Waldo Emerson, once wrote, "Knowledge is the antidote to fear." And we all know from our own personal experiences how frequently it happens that when we train the searchlight of knowledge and understanding on our problems, the fears and suspicions that have been fostered by misunderstanding, quickly disappear.

That is one reason why I am glad to be here tonight, during your Town and Country Week, to exchange ideas with you.

But I'm glad to come to Vermont for another reason also, and that is because the Green Mountain State is the home of a tried and true friend of agriculture, Senator George Aiken.

This Nation has come a long way in agriculture in recent years, and Senator Aiken has helped tremendously by supporting national programs which have aided in making this progress possible.

The knowledge that we have made great agricultural progress is itself an antidote to fear.

We all know from personal experiences that there are two kinds of fears. Some fears are legitimate -- founded on fact, on reason, on intelligence. We do well to heed such realistic fears and to remove the conditions that create them.

But there is another kind of fear that is illegitimate -- unhealthy -- unrealistic -- unfounded in fact -- and contrary to all the promptings of reason and intelligence.

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We have only to read the newspapers and magazines, or to listen to the radio and watch television, to appreciate how popular it is these days to view everything with deep alarm.

The American people have been subjected to frightening statements about agriculture -- about business -- and about our liberty itself.

For a long time it has been dinned into the ears of the American people that the farm programs would destroy the initiative of the Nation's farmers and the productivity of our agriculture.

But when we look back over recent years and consider the road that agriculture has traveled and what it has done in the service of our Nation, this prefabricated fear is completely demolished.

Take last year for a good example.

We needed big production. The goals that were presented to farmers early in 1951 called for the biggest farm production in our history. And, despite a succession of bad breaks in weather that 20 years or so ago might have been disastrous, we had a remarkable record of farm production. Drought, wet weather, and floods whittled down one of the biggest planted acreages in recent years to the smallest acreage American farmers had harvested in ten years. More than 26 million planted acres were lost or abandoned -- the biggest acreage loss since the 1936 drought.

Even so, overall 1951 farm output was close to the all-time record high.

Last year -- with about 25 million more persons in our total population than in prewar, and with about six million fewer on farms -- we consumed per person 13 percent more food than in prewar. We consumed -- per person -- a tenth more meat, a sixth more milk, a third more eggs, and about two-thirds more chicken. And, besides, we exported large quantities of food and supplied fully our growing military needs.

There's nothing in that record that supports the view that farmers have lost

the initiative and ability to produce.

On the contrary, agriculture, man for man, has increased its productivity proportionately far more than industry during the past decade.

In the period from 1941 through 1950 gross production^{per man-hour}/in industry increased 11 percent -- about one percent a year.

In agriculture, the increase^{per man-hour}/was about 35 percent -- 3-1/2 percent a year.

Does that comparison indicate that farmers have lost their initiative and that farm programs are detrimental to free enterprise?

Another prefabricated fear has been created by the repeated assertion that the agricultural economy is slowly but surely being socialized. I'm sure that all of us here firmly believe that the family-owned, family-operated farm is the very backbone of our American democracy.

We don't want the Nation's farms to be socialized or collectivized. What are the facts?

Back in 1880, when over half the people in this country lived on farms, about 74 percent of our farms were operated by their owners. From 1880 on, every census shows that the percentage of owner-operated farms became smaller. By 1930, when the depression was just getting started, less than 58 percent of our farms were operated by owners. More than four farms out of ten, in other words, were being operated by tenants or sharecroppers. If that trend had continued, we would have a situation today in which only about half of our farms would be owner-operated.

But do you know what's happened in the two decades since then? The trend that had prevailed for 50 years -- the down-slide of farm ownership that had continued decade by decade since 1880 -- was not only reversed but repaired. Today we are back to the percentage of ownership of 1880 -- about 74 percent of our farms are operated by their owners.

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In twenty years, with the aid of farm programs, we have wiped out the decline in farm ownership of the preceding half century.

I'm proud of that fact, and I like to bring it to view whenever I hear people talk about farmer regimentation, socialization, and loss of liberty. You don't regiment a nation of American family farm owners. That has been proved conclusively a number of times beginning in 1776.

Here again knowledge is the antidote to a prefabricated fear.

The same brand of misinformation that has been spread about agriculture has also been broadcast about business. How often we hear dire warnings about the imminent death of free enterprise! Again, what are the facts?

After the great depression struck, many businesses went to the wall and many others were discontinued. During World War II, when labor and materials were scarce, a large number of businesses went out of operation.

But the healthy condition of the American economy is such that we now have the largest number of business enterprises the Nation has ever had -- more than 4 million. That is an increase of almost one-third over 1929.

Actually, there are more business enterprises per capita today than there were in the boom year, 1929.

Knowledge is an antidote to the fear that we are traveling a socialistic route.

Returning now to the agricultural situation, I want to repeat that we have made immense progress.

We have done it in large part by making wise use of effective farm programs.

Farmers are now applying nearly three times as much fertilizer as they did in 1940.

They're planting better varieties and doing a better job in breeding and feeding their livestock.

They've used their increased income to mechanize and modernize their operations. There are two and a half times as many tractors on farms now as there were in 1940. There are more than twice as many trucks. There are around two-thirds of a million milking machines on farms today.

Nearly nine out of ten farms now have power line electric service. Less than 20 years ago only about one farm in ten had power line service.

As many of you know, we have fewer dairy cattle on farms now than we had before the war -- but we're getting 15 percent more milk.

We're getting about one-third more eggs per layer.

We've learned how to produce 3-pound broilers on 9 pounds of feed in 10 weeks. Ten years ago it took 12 pounds of feed and 12 weeks.

We have new meat-type hogs that give more choice cuts.

We have conservation programs that are helping preserve and increase the productivity of land and forests.

We have credit programs that aid tenants to become owners and that help farm owners produce more abundantly and efficiently.

Yet we have some legitimate fears on the farm front.

Though the Nation's farms produced close to a record volume last year -- we need at least 6 percent larger production this year.

The weakest point in our present crop situation is feed.

Unless we get a big increase in feed grains, we may have serious trouble in meat, dairy, and poultry products by this time next year.

The goals for 1952 called for a 6 percent increase in corn acreage. According to March 1 estimates of farmers' plans for the 1952 crop season, however, prospective corn acreage this year will run just about the same as last year.

If farmers plant according to the tentative plans now indicated, acreage for the principal feed grains would fall about 9 million acres short of the goals. In

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terms of production, feed grains this year would run about 7 million tons below the goals.

I have urged every farmer who has good corn land, which he has not previously intended to plant this year, to reconsider and plant additional corn acreage. Outside the areas of most efficient corn production, farmers should reconsider their tentative plans and increase their acreage and production of such feed crops as barley, grain sorghums, oats, and high quality forage.

Because of the seriousness of this situation, I have asked all Department of Agriculture agencies to see that their field representatives give it top priority in the days and weeks immediately ahead.

There will apparently be a good demand for the livestock products which will be produced from 1952 feed crops. It is in the interests of farmers to see that adequate feed grain supplies are available. They also have the assurance of announced feed grain price supports.

Large feed grain production is important to the whole country, but it has a particular importance for grain importing regions such as the Northeast, where livestock and dairying contribute a major part of agricultural income.

Nobody expects Vermont to compete with States like Iowa and Illinois in production of corn, or other feed grains. It is interesting, though, that farmers of Vermont, forty-second in size among the States, planted more corn last year than was planted in any of 12 other States. Plans for 1952, however, indicate that the farmers of this State will fall considerably short, both of the 1952 goal and of last year's average.

It is vital that every available acre of good corn land in Vermont and the other feed-grain deficit States in the New England area be planted to feed crops this year. But we also need more grass forage crops -- and that is where the New England area can probably make its biggest contribution.

Grassland farming provides a means of increasing needed forage now, and with the least labor and cost. At the same time, grass controls erosion, builds up the soil and thereby insures the land's productivity for the future.

In the humid eastern part of the United States, there are nearly a quarter of a billion acres of grassland, mostly unimproved. If we could improve this grassland, and if we also could convert into improved pasture the 70 million acres of abandoned, idle, and unsuitable cropland east of the Mississippi River, this eastern area alone could produce an additional 10 to 15 million tons of beef annually.

You can, of course, translate the added grass feed into terms of dairy or other livestock production. Whatever the end product, that improved grassland would carry 97 million additional animals.

Increasing the quantity and quality of pasture and hay crops by improving your grasslands is a wide-open challenge here in Vermont and in other localities. What has been accomplished already in the New England "Green Pastures Program" illustrates what can be done to boost pasture, hay, and silage production to meet the feed requirements of dairy and beef herds.

The farm programs likewise have proved their effectiveness in this respect. Great strides have been made through the agricultural conservation program and in soil conservation districts.

You have wisely maintained a good grassland base to work with in Vermont. You have something more than a million acres in grass now, with about 1-1/4 million acres in crops and 3-1/3 million acres in woods. Some adjustments should, or could, be made in this land-use pattern, as shown by the Soil Conservation Service's land capabilities survey.

For the most part, however, the conservationists recommend improvement of existing grassland through liming and fertilizing, and seeding various grasses and

clover, particularly to increase late-summer grazing and to control weeds and brush.

We have the results of wide and successful experience to guide us. A study made last year by soil scientists of the Department and State Experiment Stations over the eastern half of the United States showed, for example, that 24 million tons of lime spread through the ACP in 1949 was equivalent to 20 million tons more hay and pasture forage. That was enough to produce 1-1/2 billion pounds of beef, liveweight. And it was equal to the combined hay and pasture forage production for that year of the five States of West Virginia, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

Similar results have been recorded from the increased use of phosphates. But we have made only a good start in most places. Farmers' experience and research show that by liming, fertilizing, seeding, and managing efficiently, we could get two or three times the present production on millions of acres of our permanent grasslands.

Such are the possibilities, in Vermont and elsewhere, for producing the dairy, meat, and other livestock products we shall need for our dinner tables in the future. I can think of no more promising way of helping to fill the fifth plate.

Let me explain about that fifth plate.

Our national population now is about 156 million. By 1975, the United States may have a population in the neighborhood of 190 million. That's not far off -- only 23 years.

Certainly the people of the United States in 1975 will want to eat at least as well as we do today. In other words, the agriculture of this country will be called on to produce at least one-fourth more food than it has been producing in recent years.

In short, for every four plates we have been serving at American tables, we shall have a fifth plate to serve in 1975. To fill the fifth plate we shall need, among other things, 30 billion more pounds of milk a year than we produced in 1950 -- 5-1/2 billion additional pounds of meat -- almost 15 billion more eggs.

This is not an idle exercise in arithmetic. It is a real-life situation that has meaning for all of us, wherever we live and whatever occupation we follow -- in town and country alike.

We must view this trend of our national growth in proper perspective. It is not a gloomy prospect, but one of challenge and opportunity. We are a growing Nation, an expanding Nation, a Nation with immense opportunities to build for ourselves an era of good living.

We must continue to make progress in rebuilding strength in the land, strength throughout agriculture.

The pattern of farm ownership has been vastly improved in the past two decades. The income position of farmers has been strengthened. The level of living in terms of conveniences and comforts has been raised.

Yet, as all of us/^{know,} there is still a gap between the economic position of country people and town people.

To diminish that economic gap it is necessary for the whole Nation, every economic segment of it, to make progress. Farm markets, farm prices, and farm income depend upon the purchasing power of city people, more than upon any other single factor. That is why those of us who are interested in agriculture are pleased by the healthy condition of the Nation's business economy today.

We must go steadily forward in agriculture, industry and commerce, in every State, in every region, throughout the land. We must make further progress in the development and wise use of great regional resources.

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And this brings us to the consideration of a project of resource development which the Nation has long needed, and which has been stalled by prefabricated fears and lack of knowledge.

This project has special importance to you as citizens of Vermont and to your neighbors of the Northeast. It is a project which has had strong support from Senator Aiken.

I am speaking of course of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway.

For many years the Department of Agriculture has favored the development of the St. Lawrence as a seaway and a source of hydro-electric power. Opening of such a seaway from the Great Lakes to Montreal would bring important benefits to American agriculture. It would lower the cost of transporting to world markets the produce of the great agricultural heartland. Ultimately, it would improve the position of our farm commodities in world competition. It would lower the cost of shipping into the interior many of the industrial and consumer goods that farmers use. And, by connecting the steel centers of the Midwest with the iron-ore deposits of Labrador and Quebec, it would make more secure the steel supplies upon which a modern, mechanized agriculture depends.

These are the major advantages which the Nation's farmers would realize from the St. Lawrence seaway, and they are important. But the benefit which is most significant to you in the Northeast is power.

In this region, more than any other, farmers need increasing amounts of low-cost electricity. There is not enough power, and what is available costs too much. In the Northeast you have had an acute shortage of electricity since 1946. Rural areas have suffered most, and farmers with electrified farms have been prevented from making full use of power because of its high cost.

Here are just a few figures showing the high cost of energy supplied to REA-financed outlets in this region, and how these costs have risen since World War Two

In 1945, the average price paid for energy by REA-financed systems in Vermont was 10.7 mills per kilowatt-hour. By 1950 that figure had risen to 13.5 mills. During those same years, 1945 to 1950, the average cost in the United States of all energy supplied to REA-financed systems by commercial power companies dropped from 10.1 to 9.3 mills per kilowatt-hour.

Now here's a figure to compare with that 1950 average cost of 13.5 mills, which I just mentioned. It has been estimated that St. Lawrence power could be delivered at approximately 4 mills, within 300 miles of the proposed power installations. Even if this estimate were doubled to make liberal allowance for the transmission of power to cooperative load centers, there would still be great savings. And these savings would not be confined to St. Lawrence power users alone. The experience of this country in developing new and low-cost power has shown that the cost advantages are felt by all power consumers in and around the areas served by a new power source.

These are some of the reasons why American farmers, and especially those in the Northeast, have a great and special stake in development of the St. Lawrence seaway and power project.

But transcending these are the benefits which would derive to the Nation as a whole, far over-shadowing any special or regional advantages. The full development of these immense natural resources would increase the total strength and wealth of this Nation. We all would benefit. We would all gain from new power resources in the Northeast. We would all feel the expansion of industry and trade in the upper Midwest.

If the American farmer is to fill that fifth plate, he must have the electrical power to make efficient use of labor and equipment. He must have fertilizers and machines and all the aids that a rising technology can give him. These are necessities, and they imply the greatest and most efficient development of industry and transportation.

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USDA 708-52-11

An agreement between the Canadian and United States Governments providing for joint construction of the St. Lawrence project has been before the Congress since 1941. Last fall the Canadian Government proposed, if the Congress does not approve the 1941 agreement at an early date, to construct the seaway solely as a Canadian undertaking. The Canadian proposal calls for power development by the Province of Ontario in association with an appropriate agency in the United States.

In a message to Congress on January 28 of this year, President Truman urged that the United States join in constructing the seaway. In the President's words, "The question before the Congress now is whether the United States shall participate in the construction, and thus maintain joint operation and control over this development which is so important to our security and our economic progress."

Whatever the fears have been that have thus far stalled action on the St. Lawrence seaway, surely they should now be neutralized by the antidote of knowledge -- the knowledge of the great advantages to the Nation, to agriculture, and to the people of this region that would flow from completion of this vital project.

Here is an opportunity to demonstrate again the fine cooperation which has always existed between the free peoples of Canada and the United States. It can be a shining example of the mutual progress which the free peoples of the world can make by working together.

Here in New England you have a long-standing tradition of gathering around a table, or a stove, or in the town hall or town square -- and talking things over.

This Town and Country Week is very much in line with that tradition. It provides opportunity for discussion, exchange of information, and growth of knowledge. We need more meetings of this kind throughout the country.

Our Nation is strong and free. Our people are healthy and vigorous. The knowledge of our immense national vitality and strength should be a real antidote to foolish and unfounded fears.

There is no threat inside our borders, or outside, that we cannot meet, provided we are resolute both in searching out facts -- and in rejecting prefabricated fears.

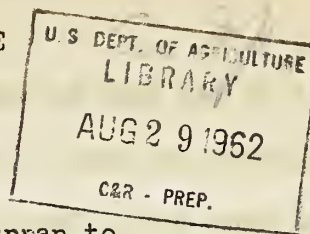
There is no threat -- outside or inside -- we cannot meet if we use our growing knowledge to strengthen the sinews of American democracy.

Knowledge is the antidote to fear.

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Aug. 18, 1952

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary



GRASS: NATURE'S BENEDICTION

Talk by Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan to
Sixth International Grassland Congress, State College,
Pennsylvania, Monday, August 18, 1952, 9:30 a.m., EST.

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It is my very great privilege to bring you the greetings of President Truman and to extend to you his warm wishes for a most successful and fruitful Grassland Congress. The United States is happy indeed to join with other countries of the world in the full and free exchange of technical experience and knowledge directed toward agricultural improvement and particularly to the work of making nutritious and useful grass grow in ever greater abundance for the benefit of the world's people.

We hope and are confident that this Sixth Congress will live up to the fine record of progress and achievement that has been made in the previous five international meetings held in various European countries. Many of our people attended one or more of these Congresses. They returned home with a very kindly feeling for their hosts and friends abroad, and we are eager now to repay what we can of this debt of hospitality by making your stay here as pleasant and satisfying as it is in our power to do. They returned with an infectious zeal for and faith in our cooperative capacity to make better use of the world's land resources for the enhancement of man's well-being and his greater dignity.

"Grass," as one of our statesmen said some 60 years ago, "is the forgiveness of nature -- her constant benediction...It yields no fruit in earth or air, and yet should its harvest fail for a single year, famine would depopulate the world." I think that statement sums up very well why you scientists and agriculturists from so many nations are meeting here at Pennsylvania State College this week.

I do not have to tell any of you that a grassland agriculture is a sound agriculture and that a grassland program is a program in the people's interest. We all know that. We all know that, for farmers, a good grassland program means lower production costs and higher income. For consumers, it means better diets. For the nation with such a program, it means greater assurance of a permanent food supply.

This Sixth International Grassland Congress is providing an opportunity for all the nations represented here to obtain facts of importance in developing a more balanced agricultural economy, a more profitable livestock industry, a higher level of nutrition for their people, and better methods for conserving land and water resources.

It is another example of the desire of people in many parts of the world to work together for the common good of all.

We have in this Congress a truly cooperative effort. We have here an example of cooperation on an international basis -- that is self-evident in your presence and in the participation in this Congress by so many nations and by the FAO of the United Nations.

But we also have here an example of very fruitful cooperation within our own national borders. Not only have the agencies and departments of our national government worked together, but business people and commercial firms have helped make this Congress possible by doing many things that government agencies could not do, and by providing funds for these activities. You will see many amazing displays and demonstrations here, some by manufacturers, and others by government agencies and agricultural institutions.

In this connection let me pay a special tribute to those representatives of business who have given much of their time, energy, and resourcefulness to make this Congress a success. This group has been led by Mr. Wilbur Carlson, Chairman of the Finance and Tours Committee, who has labored tirelessly and effectively.

This same sort of cooperation has prevailed in the national grassland program sponsored by the land-grant colleges and the Department of Agriculture, which in the two years since it began has already proved that the possibilities for grassland expansion are even larger than we had formerly dared to hope.

And a special tribute is due to Dr. Eisenhower and the administration and the personnel of Pennsylvania State College to whom we are all deeply indebted for making these fine facilities available, and for so many other contributions.

As you well know, the world has been making some progress in increasing food production, but it is not going ahead fast enough. Most of the world's people have been eating less in recent years than they did before World War Two.

The progress that could be made under ideal conditions with the knowledge and techniques now available is simply staggering to the imagination. But we cannot hope for ideal conditions -- nor can we wait for them. We must start from where we are, and do the best we can under practical, existing circumstances.

It is clear that a great new effort is called for in which the countries of the entire free world will share their technical advances with one another for long-time mutual progress as well as for very practical immediate gain.

We have full confidence in the ultimate success of such congresses as this to aid in bringing about better world economic conditions. Nevertheless, we all realize, I am sure, that this Congress is not a push button activity which will instantaneously release the bounty of peace and plenty upon the heads of people everywhere. This gathering and exchange of ideas will not work miracles -- and it will require hard work and sacrifice to bring its promise into reality.

We know from our own experience in the United States that one of the great potentials for increased food production is in grassland. Here in our own country we have a billion acres of grassland, but we are getting a far smaller proportion of the potential yields from grass than we are from cropland. It has been estimated that we are getting only about 25 percent of the real potential out of our pastures, range land, and meadows.

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USDA 1805-52-3

Our scientists tell me that we are about a quarter century behind in the development of our grassland, compared with the advances made in other aspects of agriculture.

Because grasslands are so important to the increased production of livestock and livestock products, the U. S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the land-grant colleges launched a 10 point "Better Grassland" program about two years ago. I know you will hear a full discussion of this program by those who are most intimately connected with it, so I will not presume to go into its details.

I would like to point out, however, that we now have well-defined grassland programs going forward in each of our 48 States. Upwards of one-fourth of our grassland has already been improved by one or more of the recommended practices. Nevertheless, we know that there is need to initiate improvement work, or to accelerate improvement work already under way, on about 90 percent of our grassland acres.

In the light of our record on the use and improvement of grassland, it would ill behoove us in the United States to seek to tell the people of other nations what they should do in order to use their pastures more profitably.

We have no such intention. We desire only to share and to learn.

You will find no Iron Curtain -- no curtain of any sort -- around the facts of any technical agricultural advances we may have developed in this country.

On the contrary, you will find an eagerness to exchange knowledge, and a sense of indebtedness for all that our men and women of science have learned from the men and women of science throughout the world.

We freely acknowledge our debt to the world for the crops we grow, for many of the grasses that today cover our pastures. We can never forget that we have borrowed grasses from Europe and Africa, alfalfa from Turkey, clovers from Iran and Korea.

You will find here, I feel sure, the attitude that someone has cleverly expressed as follows: "Knowledge is the only instrument of production that is not subject to the law of diminishing returns."

As I welcome you, on behalf of the President of the United States and for myself, may I express the hope that this Congress shall stand before the world as a symbol of mankind's capacity for betterment -- as a sign of mankind's determination to build and to share progress.

May this Congress indicate to all men, our united intention to move forward in these areas: Where there is hunger -- to help people produce more food. Where there are wasted and neglected resources -- to help restore and build fertility. Where there is ignorance of agricultural techniques -- to help spread knowledge. Where there is discord -- to help sow real peace.

May this Congress supply part of the answers to the ever-present questions: Where shall we look for peace? Where shall we seek and find hope for that better world which is the object of man's historic search?

May this be a Congress that asks searching questions in the knowledge that it is only by seeking the truth that we shall find it.

May this Congress take for its own the words of Kipling:

"I had six honest serving men
They taught me all I knew:
Their names were Where and What and When --
And Why and How and Who."

For us who are now living, these are critical times. But not only the present-- the future also -- hangs in the balance.

What we do -- and what we fail to do -- will mold the lives of our children and of their children.

That is why we must continue to do all in our power not only to build a peace in our time -- but for world conditions of health, prosperity, and security which will foster permanent peace -- lasting peace -- peace, with God's help, for all time.

